

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: ELECTION REPORT/VALLADOLID

SUMMARY: EMBOFF VISITED VALLADOLID MAY 31-JUNE 1 AS
PART OF EFFORT TO GET AN ON-THE-GROUND FEEL FOR
THE CONDUCT OF THE SPANISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THE
PROVINCE OF VALLADOLID IS A FAIRLY TYPICAL (5 LOWER
HOUSE SEATS) PROVINCE IN OLD CASTILE, AND THE CAMPAIGN
THERE SEEMS REMARKABLE FOR ITS NORMALCY AND RATIONALITY.
RATHER THAN ISSUESN IT IS PERSONALITIES AND VOTER
PRECEPTION OF POLITICAL TENDENCIES WHICH WILL PROBABLY
GOVERN VOTER BEHAVIOR AND NOT SURPRISINGLY, THERE
ARE PROBABLY A NUMBER OF VOTERS STILL UNDECIDED.
THE SUAREZ-LED UCD SHOULD HEAD THE PACK WITH THE PSOE
AND ALIANZA POPULAR FOLLOWING. THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS HAVING A CHANCE AT THE LAST SEAT, OR PERHAPS
EVEN A COMMUNIST. SPLINTER GROUPS FROM LEFT AND RIGHT
ARE EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE INTEREST AND ATMOSPHERE,
SOME OF IT HEATED, BUT FEW VOTES. END SUMMARY.

2. VALLADOLID, NORTHWEST OF MADRID, IS OLD CASTILE AND
IN SOME WAYS TYPICAL OF MANY MEDIUMSIZED SPANISH PROVINCES.
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THE CAPITAL CITY HAS EXPANDED RAPIDLY IN THE PAST TWENTY
YEARS AS NEW INDUSTRIES TRANSFORMED THE REGION. TODAY
TWO-THIRDS OF THE PROVINCE'S 440,000 POPULATION LIVE IN THE
CAPITAL CITY, THE REMAINDER IN NUMEROUS SMALL FARMING
TOWNS AND VILLEGES, ABOUT 25 PER CENT
OF THE CITY WORK FORCE IS DEPENDENT ON THE RENAULT AUTOMOBILE
PLANT. INDUSTRIAL GROWTH HAS NOT BEEN WITHOUT COST,

RAPID URBAN EXPANSION HAS OVERWHELMED THE ONCE ATTRACTIVE OLD CITY. WHILE SOME NEWER SECTIONS ARE WELL-BUILT AND GREEN WITH PARKS, THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY IS A MESS, CHOKED WITH TRAFFIC, A MIXTURE OF NEGLECTED (THOUGH OFTEN HANDSOME) OLDER STRUCTURES AND SOME OF THE SHODDIEST HIGH RISE APARTMENT BUILDINGS ANYWHERE.

2. RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH HAS WEAKENED THE VERY CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL FORCES, STILL STRONGEST AMONG THE SMALL FARMERS. THE CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN PROSPERITY ENSURE THE LEFTISTS A CONSIDERABLE FOLLOWING, MAINLY IN THE CITY, BUT PROSPERITY ITSELF HAS CALLED THE CENTER INTO PROMINENCE. POLITICAL POSTERS ARE EVERYWHERE BUT THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IS REMARKABLY CALM WITH NO SIGNICANT ELECTORAL VIOLENCE. SUCH BITTERNESS AS EXISTS SEEMS MAINLY AMONG THE EXTREME RIGHT SPLINTERS, WHO WILL ELECT NO ONE IN VALLADOLID.

3. ON THE EVENING OF MAY 31, THE "ALIANZA NACIONAL DEL 18 DE JULIO" (THE MOST VISIBLE EXTREME RIGHT PARTY, WITH THE VIOLENCEAPRONE BLAS PINAR-LED FUENZA NEUVA PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS) PRESENTED THEIR CANDIDATES TO THE PUBLIC AT A VALLADOLID HOTEL. BY HIRING A RELATIVELY SMALL ROOM, THEY ENSURED STANDING-ROOM ONLY. KTHE LARGER PARTIES GENERALLY HIRE MOVIE THEATERS OR EVEN SOCCER STADIUMS.) THERE, AMIDST BLUE-SHIRTS AND FLAGS, ABOUT 300 FAITHFUL GATHERED TO SING "CARA AL SOL" DENOUNCE VARIOUS "TRAITORS", AND AFFIRM THEIR LOYALTY TO THE HERITAGE OF FRANCO.

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4. VALLADOLID WILL ELECT FIVE DELEGATES TO THE LOWER HOUSE, AND THE USUAL FOUR TO THE SENATE. IN THE ABSENCE OF LOCAL OPINION POLLS. THIS IS HOW THE RACE LOOKS TO LOCAL OBSERVERS:

A. FOR THE LOWER HOUSE-

THE UC (SUAREZ-LED CENTRIST PARTY) IS CONSIDEREDLY LIKELY TO ELECT TWO DEPUTIES, UNLIKELY TO DO BETTER. THE PSOE (SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY) WILL PROBABLY ELECT ONE.

ALIANZA POPULAR (FRAFA-LED CONSERVATIVE) WILL PROBABLY ELECT ONE, ALTHOUGH THEIR SUPPORT HAS REPORTEDLY FALLEN IN RECENT WEEKS.

THE REMAINING SEAT IS UP FOR GRABS. LOCAL FDC (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC) LEADERS ARE HOPEFUL THEY CAN TAKE THIS LAST SEAT, BUT THE PSOE MAY WELL FORESTALL THEM, AND THE PCE (COMMUNISTS) ARE GIVEN AN OUTSIDE CHANCE.

B. FOR THE SENATE-

THE UCD IS VIRTUALLY CONCEDED ONE SEAT.

THE PCOE IS RUNNING ONLY CANDIDATE, A WELL-KNOWN

DOCTOR, WHO WILL PROBABLY BE ELECTED.

THE PCE IS ALSO RUNNING ONLY ONE CANDIDATE, A PROFESSOR
OF HISTORY AT THE LOCAL UNIVERSITY, AND MAY WELL ELECT
HIM.

ALIANZA POPULAR HAS ENOUGHT SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY IN
RURAL AREAS, TO BE REASONABLY CERTAIN OF ONE SEAT.

THE SENATE RACES ARE DEVELOPING INTO PERSONALITY
CONTESTS, AND SURPRISES ARE MORE LIKELY THAN IN THE LOWER
HOUSE. STABLER

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